



Paris Evangelical ---  
Africa - South - Rhodesia

175

# Barotsi-land Mission

(NORTHERN RHODESIA).

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FOUNDED  
BY THE

Rev. F. COILLARD.

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Paris Evangelical  
Missionary Society.

# Evangelical Mission to Barotsi-land, Upper Zambesi.

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# THE BAROTSI MISSION.

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## The Founding of the Paris Evangelical Mission.

THE conclusion of peace in 1815 was followed by a great revival of religion in France, and with it came the invariable accompaniment of revival—an increased interest in mission work.

This movement resulted in the foundation of the French Protestant Mission, known as the "Société des Missions Evangéliques de Paris." But it must not be supposed from its name that the P.M.S. is exclusively French in its character, for it gladly welcomes Christians of all nations, and already numbers British, Swiss, Italian, German, and Alsatian missionaries among its devoted band of workers.

In 1828 Dr. Philip, of the London Missionary Society, paid a visit to Paris, and while there he urged the P.M.S. to send missionaries to South Africa, promising that they would find there full scope for their energies. The French Government having refused them access to their own colonies, three men responded to this appeal, and settled in Basutoland, at the invitation of the great chief Moshesh.

Other missionaries joined them, and the work extended itself and prospered. In 1857 M. François Coillard went to Africa; and in 1858 the pioneer post of Leribé was confided to him. Three years later he was

married to Miss Christina Mackintosh, whose acquaintance he had made while studying in Paris.

In 1865 a serious war broke out between the Basutos and the Boers. The stations were broken up, the churches scattered, and the missionaries expelled by the Boers. M. and Madame Coillard went to Natal, where they were taken in and hospitably entertained by the American missionaries and other Christian friends.

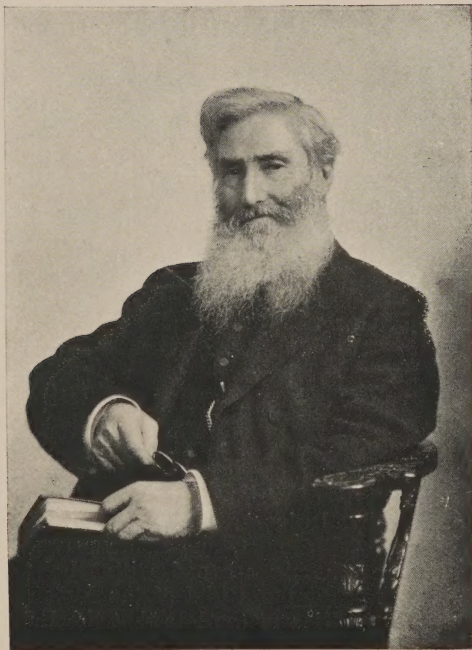
In 1869, they returned to Leribé, Basutoland having become a British Crown Colony. In the preface to his book, *On the Threshold of Central Africa*, M. Coillard writes: "It was during this forced exile of their pastors that the Basuto Christians awoke to a sense of their individual responsibility, and gave themselves up to preaching the Gospel most zealously, and with remarkable results. On their return, the missionaries, who had suffered so bitterly at being torn from their field of labour, found it completely transformed. . . . It was impossible that religious life should thus develop among the Christians without their desiring to spread still farther the name of Jesus. . . . This gave the first impulse to the Banyai Expedition."

### **The First Banyai Expedition.**

In 1875 an expedition started, consisting of several native Christians, for which the Basutos themselves had raised funds, under the leadership of a young missionary named Dieterlen, to carry the Gospel to the Banyai, a tribe scattered over the north of the Transvaal, and in the part we now call Mashonaland (S. Rhodesia). A month later the whole party was stopped in Pretoria, and sent back to Basutoland.



REV. F. COILLARD.



*Photo, Elliott and Fry.*

## The Second Banyai Expedition.

Later on, the Dutch Government intimated indirectly that they would allow another expedition to pass through, if an experienced person were placed at the head.

At this time M. and Madame Coillard were on the point of leaving for Europe, to take their first holiday after 20 years of toil. But when the call came, to leave all that had been *home* to them since their arrival in Africa, they cheerfully relinquished their cherished plans to enter on a wandering life, full of toil and danger.

The second expedition left Leribé on April 16th, 1877. It consisted of M. and Madame Coillard, their niece (Elise Coillard, a girl of 15, who had recently come to live with them), four Basuto catechists, and four other men as drivers and leaders for the waggon. Of these, three were volunteers and devoted Christians. After crossing the Limpopo river, between the Transvaal and Rhodesia, they continued their way north by a route practically identical with the Chartered Company's main road to Fort-Salisbury. But then, of course, there was no road—they had to hew their way through a trackless forest, steering by the compass, their lives constantly endangered by the attacks of man and beast. At last they reached a spot not far from the Zimbabwe Ruins, where they were entrapped by a crafty and treacherous chief named Masonda, and made prisoners. After many vicissitudes, in which they barely escaped with their lives, an armed force, sent by Lobengula, Supreme Chief of the Matabele, brought them to Bulawayo.

They had learnt too late that the Banyai were only one of many tribes subject to him, and that his permission was necessary before they could

carry on the work of evangelisation among them. After four months of suspense, during which they were kept in captivity at Bulawayo, this permission was absolutely refused, and the second expedition to the Banyai came to an end.

### **The Barotsi Nation.**

Many years ago one of the Basuto tribes, named Makololo, migrated northwards, under the leadership of a chief named Sebetoane, conquering as they went, till they finally settled north of the Zambesi, above the Victoria Falls, where they subjected all the tribes, and founded a large empire. On the death of Sekeletu, Sebetoane's successor, one of these tribes, the Barotsi, took advantage of the state of the nation, distracted by civil war, to revolt, and exterminated the Makololos, root and branch. But, though the Barotsi now became paramount, the language of their former masters remained as the means of communication between a large number of tribes, each of which had its own dialect. This region had been explored by Dr. Livingstone.

### **First Expedition to the Zambesi.**

While M. Coillard and his fellow-prisoners were at Bulawayo, the fact, already stated by Livingstone, that the two languages—Sesuto and Sekololo—were the same, was forced on their notice by the arrival of some refugees from Barotsi-land. "Why do you grieve not to be allowed to go and teach the Banyai, whose language is strange to you," they said, "when you know *ours* already?" These words suggested the idea that perhaps *this* was the field of labour the Lord had set before them.

After their final dismissal from Lobengula's capital, the expedition turned homewards by way of Khama's country, the Christian chief of Bechuanaland, whose capital—Shoshong—they reached on April 27th, 1878. They were received most hospitably, and the chief encouraged their project of going on to the Zambesi. He procured guides, and sent an ambassador before them to Robosi (as the Barotsi chief was then called). On July 26th, 1878, they reached Leshoma, a place about 12 miles south of the Zambesi. After many wearisome delays, the advance of the rainy season, the lack of provisions, and above all, the health of the party, obliged them to return. Not, however, before they had so far accomplished the purpose of their journey that they had received a vague invitation to come back and settle in the country.

But *all* did not return to the homes they had left. Three graves remained, as one of the victims said, "to be the finger-posts of the mission."

## Second Expedition to the Zambesi.

In August, 1882, M. and Madame Coillard returned to Leribé, after 2½ years' absence in Europe. During this period they travelled through England, Scotland, France, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, and Belgium, awakening interest in the Mission wherever they went. In January, 1884, they were able to start for the Zambesi. The party consisted of M., Madame and Mademoiselle Coillard, M. Jeanmairet, a young Swiss missionary; three native evangelists, with their families; and two lay-helpers—of whom one was Waddell, a Scotch cabinetmaker. During the interval between the first and second expeditions, Mr. Arnot, the well-known





CANOES ON ZAMBESI.

Scottish missionary-explorer, had been at Robosi's capital (having for pupils among others, the king's son, Litia, and Mokamba, a young chief), but shortly before the arrival of the party from Basutoland his health obliged him to leave by way of the East Coast. Once more, on July 26th, 1884, the camp was pitched at Leshoma, and here they were forced to remain for 13 months, while civil war raged in the country, and the king (Robosi) was driven into exile.

### The Mission to the Barotsi.

The month of August, 1885, marks the end of the *expedition* and the beginning of the *Mission*, for it was then that the whole party crossed the river with their waggons and oxen to Kazungula, then the official entrance to the country. From Kazungula, they went up the river to Sesheke, which later on was placed under M. Jeanmairé's charge, and there, on November 4th, 1885, his marriage with Mademoiselle Coillard was celebrated.

About this time Robosi was restored to power under his new name of Lewanika, by which he is now known. M. Coillard paid him a visit at Lealui, and then in August, 1886, founded another station at Sefula, 16 miles from the river.

A few days after their arrival they were presented to the nation at the *lekhothla*, or a public council, by the king, and, after a lengthy discussion, the missionaries were formally received as "Barotsis and benefactors."

This was an encouraging beginning; but what was the character of those who made these fair promises?

PALM TREE  
AND VICTORIA  
FALLS.

*Photo.*

*Rev. F. Coillard.*



The Barotsi are an intelligent, industrious people, rapidly acquiring European customs and handicrafts, and the grace of God develops many loveable qualities in them. But there is another and a very dark side to their character. After years of experience among many different tribes, M. and Madame Coillard confessed that they had never even imagined such depths of depravity as they found here. The most barbarous cruelty, utter disregard of family ties, of the value of human life, or of the sacredness of property ; the most degrading superstitions—these were some of the horrors of that darkness which the light of the Gospel had to dispel.

The Barotsi excel in the art of mockery ; not a word, not a gesture escapes them—all is reproduced and caricatured amid peals of derisive laughter. It will be easily understood how this complete lack of reverence increases the difficulty of making an impression on them. The witch doctor reigned supreme, and many times the missionaries were in danger of being burnt as sorcerers and of seeing their helpers thrown to the crocodiles. But each time God interposed.

The strain of all this told heavily upon Madame Coillard's health, and it was with great joy that they welcomed the arrival of four more missionaries in August, 1887—M. and Madame Louis Jalla, from the Waldensian Valleys ; Dr. Dardier ; and M. Goy, from Switzerland. Of these, M. Louis Jalla is the only survivor.

Political incidents of great importance took place about this time. A large concession of land was made to a British mining company, and later, on June 27th, 1890, a treaty was signed with the British South African Chartered Company, which granted concessions in return for protection over the whole country.



## Death of Madame Coillard.

Towards the beginning of October, 1891, Mdme. Coillard begged M. Coillard, in spite of her increasing weakness, to take her to Lealuyi. M. Coillard wrote afterwards: "The service held in the evening filled us with unspeakable joy. Our dear Litia (the king's son), in a simple and touching discourse, made a public profession of his faith, and while he spoke, Mokamba, also a young man of the royal family, wept and then burst into sobs. A Morotsi weeping for his sins! 'This is a sight I would have travelled hundreds of miles to see,' she exclaimed, 'and we have only come from Sefula!'"

The following day (Monday) Madame Coillard was ill in bed. They took her back to Sefula, and laid her on the bed of sickness from which she was never to rise again. "Do be in earnest, *do!*" were almost the last words she uttered.

However, the awakening she had lived to see at Lealuyi was the beginning of better things, and since then the light of the Gospel has slowly but surely been penetrating this, one of the darkest corners of the heathen world.

## At Lealuyi.

In October, 1892, M. Coillard removed his headquarters to Lealuyi, the capital. The site given by the king for the new mission station had been till then the Golgotha of Paganism, where all sorcerers were executed, the bushes and briars with which it was covered scarcely concealing the charred bones and other relics of slaughter. The place is a low mound, named

Loatile, about ten minutes' walk from the capital, and raised a few feet above the level of the surrounding plain. During the rainy season it is an islet, and becomes the home and refuge of all reptiles and other creeping things. The task of converting it into a habitable spot has been long and arduous. The brushwood has had to be cleared away, the ground raised and levelled, a house and church built, and—thanks again to the same kind friend—a causeway has been made, enabling foot passengers to pass dry shod from Loatile to the village.

In the superintendence of all these building operations, M. Coillard was ably seconded by Mr. Waddell, but in 1895 the state of his health deprived the Mission of his valuable services, obliging him to return to his home in Scotland, and in 1909 he died after fourteen years of terrible suffering and blindness.

In the same year the Bible school was opened for the training of native evangelists.

Later on, M. Coillard took a journey up the river, visiting hitherto unknown and unexplored parts, and meeting with many strange adventures, as far as the Chief Kakenge's, on the border of the Barotsi Kingdom.

In March, 1896, increasing illness forced him—definitely, it was *then* feared—to leave the work so dear to him and return to Europe for medical treatment. But happily his health was so far restored, that on 10th December, 1898, he was able to return to Africa with a band of 14 new helpers, including the medical missionary so ardently desired. They reached the Zambesi safely, but before they could proceed up-river to the capital, the youngest of the party, Mme. Bouchet, was taken away by fever. Two months earlier Mme. Louis Jalla had also laid down her life at Sesheke.



KING LEWANIKA TO-DAY.

Although the superstitions of the Barotsi forbid them to touch a corpse or come near a house where a death has occurred, Christian native women of their own accord prepared Mdmé. Jalla's beloved form for the coffin, and chiefs volunteered to carry her to the grave, so great a change had come to them.

### Present State of the Work.

There are at present eight stations, with about thirty missionaries, wives included, besides one Basuto and five Barotsi evangelists and the wives of some of them, with a yearly expenditure of about £5,400, exclusive of special calls. At least eight more stations are needed at once.

And as to results? Well, one cannot take a census of the work of the Holy Spirit. But some years ago there was a very decided awakening, resulting in many conversions, and though since there have been some relapses, yet in each place there remains a handful of faithful ones, and some leading chiefs are among the number. Litia, the heir to the throne, professes to be a Christian, and, though polygamy, alas! is still his snare, he seems to be a sincere though faltering believer. The king himself, though not yet a Christian, offers no hindrance to the work of the Gospel, and has publicly declared that, as far as he is concerned, everyone is free to accept it, even his own family. He also forbade infanticide, the buying and selling of slaves in his country, and the making of beer in his capital. Mokamba, the young man above mentioned, is now his son-in-law, and the king appointed him Prime Minister over the head of several older men, because he said: "He is a Christian whose mind will be open to every sort of progress."



A large part of the country is now open to European enterprise, but up to the present the Barotsi Valley has been treated as a native reserve. In June, 1898, the British South African Company took over the administration, and there are already many white inhabitants. Need we wonder that the missionaries look forward to the future with the greatest anxiety, and count upon the sympathies and prayers of British Christians under whose flag they are now living and working.

The Mission, though having its headquarters in Paris, is eclectic. It includes workers of French birth, German, English, Waldensian (Italian), and Swiss; "yet all one family," as M. Coillard says. Two of the ladies are trained nurses. Two small hospitals were built, and there are dispensaries on every station. The natives suffer from the climate as much as do the Europeans, and chronic diseases, especially leprosy, are rife. For some years the Mission was privileged to possess medical missionaries—Dr. de Prosch, Dr. Reutter, Dr. Troendle—who accomplished most valuable work, but at present, unfortunately, this post is vacant. We earnestly hope it will soon be filled.

The climate of the Upper Zambesi is a very trying one. Shortly after Mr. Coillard's return in 1898 a veritable death wave rolled over it, and out of 24 young people who went out about that time, eight died and eleven were sent home either invalided or widowed. In all, up to the time of writing (1913), the Barotsi Mission has cost the lives of eighteen adult Europeans (15 in Africa and 3 invalided home), besides several children, and five native evangelists from Basutoland. The beloved founder, the Rev. F. Coillard, passed away on May 27th, 1904, after a very brief illness, and was buried at Sefula beside his wife.

The completion of the railroad from the Cape to Victoria Falls two months later marked the close of the pioneer period. Nevertheless, as the railway has been continued in a north-easterly direction, it does not help the stations of the Upper Zambesi, which all lie to the west; these are just as inaccessible as before, and the transport is just as dangerous and costly. Only last year a newly-arrived lady teacher lost her entire personal outfit through the upsetting of a canoe near Lealui.

Thanks to the energy of Dr. Reutter, who erected the first mosquito-proof dwelling at his own expense, a Building Fund was started after M. Coillard's death to provide hygienic houses on every station, and since these have been built the health conditions have greatly improved, though malarial fever is still terribly prevalent.

During the first three years after M. Coillard's death the mission work made but little progress, rather it went back. This was due partly, no doubt, to the removal of his great personal influence, but also to the enfeebling of the Mission staff by sickness and death, and to the unsettled condition of the country. The completion of the railway brought an influx of Europeans; the natives feared their country was going to be taken from them, and the influence of a Basuto evangelist who had joined the Ethiopian Church sowed distrust of the missionaries in their minds, which at first was deepened by the official abolition of slavery and the institution of the hut-tax by the Administration in 1906. Both these latter measures were necessary for the development of the country, but they were not popular either with chiefs or people, who, of course, could not appreciate the reasons for them, and who, in their ignorance, blamed the missionaries for not preventing

them. But since 1907 they have gradually settled down to the new conditions, and there has been quiet, steady progress everywhere. Nearly 1,000 children are under instruction in the schools, and the Churches are well attended on Sundays, the audiences averaging from 100 to 250. Since the publication of the Frontier Award in 1905, a new station has been

**WORSHIP  
OF THE  
ZAMBESIAN.**

Offering a bowl of  
water to the Sun.

*Photo by*

*Rev. T. Burnier.*



founded at Lukona in the forest on the west bank of the Zambesi, and here, as everywhere else in the country, the missionaries are treated with confidence and respect.

In 1909 the Heir-Apparent, Litia, was present as a professed Christian (though, alas! not wholly a consistent one) at the Jubilee of the Barotsi Mission to thank the native Church in that country for sending the Gospel to his own. In 1911, the Barotsi missionaries, with their flocks, met at Sefula and celebrated the 25th anniversary of the founding of that station, the first in the Barotsi Valley.

## A New Era.

The last year, 1911-12, has witnessed several deaths amongst those Christians in Europe whose faith founded and whose prayers upheld the Barotsi Mission in its earliest days, *e.g.* : in England, Mr. J. E. Mathieson ; in France, the Rev. Georges Appia, M. Louis Sautter, M. J. de Seynes (the venerable President of Paris Missionary Society), and the Rev. Alfred Boegner, the honoured Director. They are succeeded by the Rev. J. Bianquis and the Rev. D. Couve, as co-directors, and by Count Jacques de Pourtalès as President (Chairman) of the Society. The loss of so many devoted faithful helpers makes us desire to enlist new friends, and this little book, written some years ago, is being sent out once more in a new form to bring the needs of this great work before God's stewards in the English-speaking countries.



## The Zambesias.

All over the Continent of Europe Auxiliary Committees—called *Zambesias*—have been founded, in order to support the Barotsi Mission by *spiritual* and *practical* help. They are pledged to give their prayers and free-will offerings *regularly* to the Barotsi Mission on the Upper Zambesi. The formation of these groups has been chiefly due to the efforts of Captain A. Bertrand, of Geneva, the well-known Swiss explorer, who himself was one of the pioneer travellers of the Upper Zambesi, and who was so powerfully impressed by the value of the mission work there that he has ever since been its devoted champion. There are very few Zambesias, however, in England, and it is earnestly desired to increase their number. The Zambesi region of Northern Rhodesia has a great claim on this country. It is a British Protectorate and, as such, it is offering a livelihood to many of our countrymen. Moreover, it forms the key to the interior. The slave trade has been put down, slavery abolished, and merchants are also forbidden to trade with the natives in European spirits. Peace is rigorously preserved, and even-handed justice (not always popular) is, as far as possible, dealt out. The schools are encouraged by the Government, which has lately allocated to them part of the proceeds of the hut tax.\* All the conditions are favourable just at present to the spread of the Gospel, but how long that will continue no one can tell. Mohammedanism is pressing down from the North-East—up till now, thank God, it has not entered Barotsi-land, and the rigorous cordons drawn to avert sleeping sickness or the slave trade have also kept away Islam. Who can measure the value to the future of Christianity in Africa of a closely welded Christian community

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\*The subsidy is very small however, viz. : £100 a year between the schools of the seven stations, and four or five outstations.

on the Upper Zambesi, the very heart of South Central Africa? The influence might be as potent and as precious as that of Uganda in the North.

We earnestly appeal to all English-speaking Christians in this country on behalf of this great and difficult work, on which the Divine seal has so manifestly been set.

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The publications named on the cover, as well as this booklet (price **3d.**) can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 55, Silverdale Road, Eastbourne, or from the Assistant Secretary, 5, Hornsey Rise Gardens, London, N. Remittances should accompany orders.

## MISSION STAFF, 1913.

<b>Lealui.</b>	Rev. ADOLPHE JALLA. Rev. and Mme. V. ELLENBERGER. Miss R. E. SMITH. Mlle. SAUCON.	<b>Sefula.</b>	Rev. A. and Mme. COISSON. Rev. E. BOITEUX. M. and Mme. HUGUENIN (lay helpers). Mlle. J. DIETRICH.
<b>Lukona.</b>	Rev. T. and Mme. BURNIER. Mlle. AMEZ-DROZ. Rev. R. DIETERLEN.	<b>Sesheke.</b>	M. and Mme. LESCOUTE (lay helpers). Mlle. A. FABRE. M. and Mme. ROULET.
<b>Mabumbu.</b>	Rev. and Mme. G. VOLLA. Mlle KIENER. Mlle. DOGIMONT. Rev. and Mme. CHRISTOL.	<b>Livingstone.</b>	Rev. LOUIS and Mme JALLA.
<b>Nalolo.</b>	Rev. A. and Mme. LAGEARD. M. and Mme. VERNET (lay helpers).	<b>In Europe.</b>	Rev. J. and Mme. BOUCHET. Rev. and Mme. BERGER.

## SOME DATES.

- 1878.—First visit of Rev. F. Coillard to Barotsi-land, Upper Zambesi.  
 1884-5.—The Barotsi Mission founded at Sesheke.  
 1886.—The Barotsi Mission founded at Sefula.  
 1891.—Death of Madame Coillard. First conversions. Barotsi-land a British Protectorate.  
 1902.—King Lewanika's visit to England for Coronation of King Edward VII.  
 1904.—Death of Rev. F. Coillard. Railroad reaches Victoria Falls.  
 1905.—Foundation of the township of Livingstone, at Victoria Falls. Barotsi-land Frontier Award proclaimed. Foundation of Lukona Station, West Bank of Zambesi.  
 1906.—Abolition of Domestic Slavery proclaimed. Establishment of Hut Tax.  
 1908.—Inauguration of the Coillard Memorial Hall at Livingstone. General Missionary Conference at Victoria Falls.  
 1909.—Litia, the heir-apparent of Barotsi-land, present at the Barotsi Missionary Jubilee of Morija, to thank the Basutos for sending the Gospel to his country, bringing peace and enlightenment.  
 1911.—25th anniversary of the founding of Sefula Station celebrated, by the assembling there of missionaries, native Christians and adherents from the seven stations of the Mission.

## PUBLICATIONS.

1907. COILLARD OF THE ZAMBESI, by C. W. Mackintosh, 5/-. (T. Fisher Unwin.)  
 AN ARTISAN MISSIONARY ON THE ZAMBESI, by Rev. J. Maconachie, 1/6. (Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier).  
 ON THE THRESHOLD OF CENTRAL AFRICA, by F. Coillard, 6/-. (Hodder & Stoughton.)  
 1898. THE KINGDOM OF THE BAROTSI. (T. Fisher Unwin.) By Captain A. Bertrand.

## MAGAZINES.

- JOURNAL DES MISSIONS EVANGÉLIQUES, Published in Paris. The Organ of the Paris Missionary Society. 6 frs. (5/-) a year; 5/6 post free.  
 NOUVELLES DU ZAMBEZE, Published in Geneva thrice a year. Contains all the letters of the Barotsi Missionaries. 1 franc a year; 1/- post free.  
 NEWS FROM BAROTSI-LAND, Published in London thrice a year. 1/- a year post free.



# SKETCH MAP OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Showing sphere of work of the Barotsi Mission in black.